

Community Meeting questions – Saturday, September 28, 2024
Responses to questions after Spear-Rhodes, LTD presentation – Organization Review

On Saturday, September 28th, three members of Spear-Rhodes (Judi Spear, Wayne Spear, Katrina Bremner) attended the Community Meeting and gave an overview of the Organization Review – how it was conducted, findings and recommendations. The following questions were submitted by members at the meeting. In addition to these questions, submitted in writing, other questions were asked during the presentation. The recorded meeting is posted on the Community Facebook page.

- Can the membership have a copy of the RFP that was used to hire Spear-Rhodes?
Yes, and copies can be picked up at the front office reception.
- Will progress to goals be visible (transparent) before the next election? *Chief & Council have set five priorities based on the Organization Review recommendations. Now that a Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is in place, the Community should expect regular updates on progress toward these priorities.*
- Will the Chief & Council use other expert resources of community members who are not staff? *In the recent past, an inventory of skills and experience in the Community was created. This information will be used as Community needs are identified. Whenever possible, the Council supports using skilled community members.*
- Is this the new strategic plan or is the previous (Pillar System) in effect? *We presented the process, findings and recommendations for the Organization Review. Prior and ongoing research is also being considered. The results of all these findings will be used to update the Community Plan and Strategic Plan. The Pillar System will likely be replaced by something more representative of Indigenous thinking.*
- Do Finance & HR Director report to Executive Director? To whom will a Director or Manager (whatever the title) report? *HR and Finance were separated into 2 different roles. CFO and CAO report directly to Council. The two Sr. Directors will report to the CAO. The CAO is responsible for creating the overall administrative structure and overseeing its work. The CAO position was vacant for three years. The Executive Director roles have been replaced by the two Senior Directors. A new Organization Chart has been created and the CAO is still reviewing it with Administration leaders.*
- Is this a strategic plan? Is it a 1 year, 3 year or 5 year plan? *The Organization Review is a 'check-up' designed to measure what is working for the Mississaugas of the Credit Nation and what needs to be done differently or more of. It is one part of assessing Community needs and along with other research, previously or currently taking place, will be used for short- and long-term plans. The goal is to keep the Community apprised of the plans and progress. The Council is close to finalizing a long-term plan that initiated a number of years ago.*
- How do we work with off-reserve Native organizations such as surrounding Friendship (Centers)? *Councilor Erma Ferrell is working on a plan to bring Community events to off-reserve members, creating Partnerships with other First Nation organizations. Progress on this initiative can be shared as part of the Community Communication plan. The Chief has met with some of the off-reserve organizations to build better relations. The Council will continue to do this work.*

- For off-reserve (e.g. local Hamilton, Niagara, out of country), consult all areas or towns. Clear rationale and support for recommendations. *Councilor Erma Ferrell is working on this. Stay tuned for more information.*
- Communication needs to be professional and mature. Work as a team and be respectful to each other. There are a few that lack these attributes and are totally not professional. For the benefit of our community, this must be prioritized. What steps are planned to promote teamwork? *The Organization Review recommended a series of activities to build shared understanding which leads to better teamwork. We demonstrated one of these tools – DiSC – at the Community Meeting. DiSC stands for Dominant, Influencing, Steady and Conscientious...four different ways people around the world work and communicate. Respecting the needs of these four different ways of communicating and working leads to more professional communication.*
- How to bridge the gap between the ‘now’ generation and retired seniors without making seniors feel less intelligent. What’s the plan? *The Organization Review made suggestions as to how youth and seniors could work together with each benefiting from the knowledge, skills and experience of the other. CAO is currently assessing the senior and youth programs and their effectiveness to the needs of both.*
- Who organized the focus groups? *Spear-Rhodes worked with department leaders to arrange Administration and Education focus groups. For Community focus groups we worked with Councilors, the Communication Department and members of Administration who work with seniors.*
- Who oversees the process, DiSC is actually being followed. *Spear-Rhodes facilitators bring people together in workshops and one on one conversations to teach this tool. When people use DiSC recommendations and they see communication improve, they tend to continue using the recommendations. Change takes time and it helps to be patient as people learn how to communicate and work with each other in new ways.*
- Support is more our traditional way. Wisdom teaches all people are needed but our ways have always been to support and help each other. How will this be integrated? *Spear-Rhodes follows 3 principles to help a Community integrate the changes people ask for. Our recommendations are based on these three principles when we conduct an Organization Review.*
 - *Plan change with people not for people. This is why we conducted interviews with more than 30 people and included more than 125 people in focus groups. We bring their voice to the Chief & Council so that their needs can be understood, prioritized and addressed.*
 - *Build shared understanding of the need for the changes. Interviews and focus groups bring the perspective of the people. Chief & Council can share their perspective. This mix of information, along with discussion, ultimately can be used to create shared understanding.*
 - *Follow a process. We recommend 6 steps*
 - *identify the need*
 - *research the need*
 - *present the research*
 - *develop and present a plan to stakeholders to check for agreement*
 - *act*

- *evaluate the actions taken, adjusting as necessary.*

Communicating the results of each step continues to build shared understanding across Community members. Change is best implemented in a systematic, organized way. It has a better chance of meeting the goal(s) when this process is followed. Changes that make sense and reflect the community needs are successfully integrated.

- Councillors & Chief don't show up to answer questions, especially for community meetings. Why doesn't Councillors & Chief attend community meetings or leave early when they do? They need to be responsible, accountable & transparent. *A year-long plan and schedule will help Councillors to ensure they can attend as many meetings as possible. Periodically, Councilors and the Chief must respond to requests to attend meetings and events outside the community. The goal is to have as much representation as possible at Community meetings. The only time the Chief or Council have been away is when they are on Council business that day or on vacation. Outside of that, they agreed to be present.*
- Community meetings are not advertised enough. Compensation reviews and updates a must. *A plan has been created to expand the Communication Department and to use more avenues to publicize meetings and the agenda. We have recommended a published year-long schedule with an annual focus or theme and a standing agenda that can be modified as needed. Information can be sent through a variety of channels in addition to those already used. Community members on and off-reserve can be kept abreast of what each meeting will focus on.*
- Given what was presented for short-term and long-term goals comes with the need for financial support. It was not identified which Council members were proactively working on this. Please clarify all this financial support aside from our source funds lobbying for shortfalls in funding. *All Council knows it's their responsibility to seek additional funds for their respective area's.*
- How much are you being paid to do this job? *We submitted a proposal for \$27,375 which was accepted. Any additional work outside of the proposed amount has to be approved by Council.*